

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 05033 191918Z

10

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SUBJECT: COMMUNITY POLICY ON REPROCESSING

REF: A) EC BRUSSELS 2989, B) EC-A-158

1. IN THE EC PARLIAMENT IN STRASBOURG ON MAY 7, 1976, A REPORT BY MR. NOE, ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT SENATOR, CONCERNING COMMISSION POLICY FOR THE REPROCESSING OF IRRADIATED FUEL AND MATERIAL WAS PRESENTED. A COPY OF THIS REPORT IS BEING AIR POUCHED SEPARATELY. THE REPORT ANALYZES THE PRESENT SUPPLY DEMAND SITUATION IN THE COMMUNITY AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. BASED ON THESE ANALYTICAL CALCULATIONS,,MR.NOE CONCLUDED THAT ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNITY SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT REPROCESSING CAPACITY THROUGH 1982, HE FORESEES A SHORTFALL IN THE U.S AND JAPAN. HE FEELS THAT EUROPE ACTING AS A COMMUNITY SHOULD BE ABLE TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS SHORT-FALL AND POSSIBLY A COMMUNITY POLICY SHOULD BE FORMULATED WHICH WOULD MAKE OPTIMUM USE OF THE COMMUNITY'S TECHNOLOGY AND CAPABILITIES IN THE FUEL REPROCESSING

2. ON MAY 11, THE EC PARLIAMENT APPROVED THE NOE REPORT AND A PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON THE NEED FOR A COMMUNITY POLICY ON THE REPROCESSING AND RECOMMENDED THAT THE REPORT BE FORWARDED TO THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 EC BRU 05033 191918Z

COUNCIL AND THE COMMISSION OF THE EC.

3. ON MAY 12, EC COMMISSIONER FOR INDUSTRIAL POLICY SPINELLI RESPONDED TO THE PARLIAMENT'S URGING THAT A COMMUNITY POLICY ON REPROCESSING BE INITIATED. HE SAID THAT THE COMMISSION AT PRESENT IS DRAWING UP CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR A COMMUNITY POLICY ON THE REPROCESSING OF IRRADIATED FUELS AND HOPES TO BE ABLE TO FORWARD THESE PROPOSALS TO THE COUNCIL BY THE END OF THE YEAR. AT PRESENT, THE COMMISSION IS ASSESSING THE WHOLE REPROCESSING SECTOR FROM MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS (TECHNOLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, SAFETY, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, ETC), TO ASCERTAIN THE WEAK POINTS. THESE STUDIES HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR THE PAST 8 MONTHS AND HAVE ALREADY INVOLVED CONTACTS WITH THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF THE MEMBER STATES.

COMMENT: WHILE THE PRESENT TARGET IS TO FOMULATE A COMMUNITY POLICY ON REPROCESSING BY THE END OF THE YEAR, THE WORKING LEVEL COMMISSION OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF THIS EFFORT ARE DUBTFUL THAT THE YEAR END TARGET COULD BE MET.

4. SINCE THERE ALREADY EXISTS IN THE COMMUNITY AN INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION OF MAJOR REPROCESSING COMPANIES (UNITED REPROCESSORS) COMPOSED OF BNFL- ENGLAND; KEWA-WEST GERMANY; AND CEA-FRANCE, WHICH HAVE DISTRIBUTED AMONG THEMSELVES THE FUTURE REPROCESSING CAPACITY REQUIRED TO SATISFY PROJECTED DEMAND, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT FORM A POTENTIAL " COMMUNITY" POLICY WOULD TAKE,

5. ONE POSSIBLE ROLE IS THE OFFERING OF EURATOM LOANS FOR REPROCESSING PROJECTS. AS INDICATED IN REFTEL, THE EC COUNCIL HAS BEEN CONSIDERING FOR OVER A YEAR A COMMISSION PROPOSAL TO AUTHORIZE EURATOM TO BORROW ON CAPITAL MARKETS. THESE FUNDS WOULD BE USED TO FINANCE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN TIED-UP WITH THE MEMBER STATES' GENERAL DEBATE ON A COMMON ENERGY POLICY AND CONSEQUENTLY WE DO NOT KNOW WHEN, IF EVER, IT MIGHT BE APPROVED. WE ALSO DO NOT KNOW IF EURATOM LOANS COULD BE EXTENDED TO COVER REPROCESSING PLANTS.

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